

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 161760

FOL REPEAT OSLO 2597 SENT ACTION SECSTATE JUNE 23, 1975

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L OSLO 2597

FROM USDEL ANTARCTIC

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: TGEN,XV,PLOS,NO

SUBJECT: EIGHTH ANTARCTIC TREATY CONSULTATIVE MEETING-SUMMARY
REPORT

SUMMARY: EIGHTH ANTARCTIC TREATY CONSULTATIVE MEETING,
9-20 JUNE, CONSIDERED 22 ITEM AGENDA AND ADOPTED 14
RECOMMENDATIONS TO GOVERNMENTS. ISSUE OF EXPLORATION AND
EXPLOITATION OF ANTARCTIC MINERAL RESOURCES DOMINATED
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CONFERENCE IN BOTH FORMAL AND INFORMAL MEETINGS. RE-
COMMENDATION ADOPTED DURING FINAL MOMENTS OF MEETING
REPRESENTS BREAKTHROUGH FOR TREATY CONSULTATIONS BECAUSE
ISSUE HAS LARGELY BEEN AVOIDED DURING AND SINCE NEGO-

TIATION OF TREATY DUE TO SENSITIVE AND CONTENTIOUS NATURE.
END SUMMARY

1. THE EIGHTH ANTARCTIC TREATY CONSULTATIVE MEETING, HELD IN OSLO FROM JUNE 9 THROUGH 20, DEALT WITH A 22 POINT AGENDA RANGING FROM ENVIRONMENTAL TO POLITICAL/JURIDICAL QUESTIONS. THE LATTER, PARTICULARLY THE ISSUE OF MINERAL RESOURCE EXPLORATION AND EXPLOITATION, DOMINATED THE CONFERENCE BOTH IN MEETINGS AND IN THE CORRIDORS. THE CONFERENCE PASSED 14 RECOMMENDATIONS TO GOVERNMENTS, AS FOLLOWS:

RECOMMENDATION VII-1 - SPECIALLY PROTECTED AREAS: LITCHFIELD ISLAND

RECOMMENDATION VII-2-REVIEW OF SPECIALLY PROTECTED AREAS

RECOMMENDATION VII-23-SITES OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST

RECOMMENDATION VII-4-SITES OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST: INTERIM GUIDELINES

RECOMMENDATION VII-5-PERMITS FOR ENTRY TO SPECIALLY PROTECTED AREAS

RECOMMENDATION VII-6-ANNUAL EXCHANGES OF INFORMATION

RECOMMENDATION VII-7-COOPERATION IN TRANSPORT

RECOMMENDATION VII-8-ACTIVITIES OF STATES THAT ARE NOT CONSULTATIVE PARTIES

RECOMMENDATION VII-9-EFFECTS OF TOURISTS AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL EXPEDITIONS IN THE ANTARCTIC TREATY AREA

RECOMMENDATION VII-10-ANTARCTIC MARINE LIVING RESOURCES

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RECOMMENDATION VII-11-MAN'S IMPACT ON THE ANTARCTIC ENVIRONMENT

RECOMMENDATION VII-12-DISPOSAL OF NUCLEAR WASTE

RECOMMENDATION VII-13-THE ANTARCTIC ENVIRONMENT

RECOMMENDATION VII-14-ANTARCTIC MINERAL RESOURCES: THE QUESTION OF EXPLORATION AND EXPLOITATION

RECOMMENDATIONS VII-10 AND 14 WERE THE SUBJECT OF CONSIDERABLE NEGOTIATIONS. THE USDEL TOOK AN EARLY LEADING ROLE WITH REGARD TO "MARINE LIVING RESOURCES" BY OFFERING TO PROVIDE FACILITIES IN THE US FOR A NON-GOVERNMENTAL

MEETING OF SCIENTISTS AND EXPERTS ON CONSERVATION OF MARINE LIVING RESOURCES AND RELATED MATTERS IF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE ON ANTARCTIC RESEARCH(SCAR) RESPONDS TO THE URGING OF THE CONSULTATIVE PARTIES TO CONVENE SUCH A MEETING. NSF WILL PROVIDE NECESSARY FUNDS.

THE PERTINENT RECOMMENDATION(VII-10) CALLS FOR FURTHER STUDIES OF MARINE BIOLOGY AND ECOLOGY OF THE ANTARCTIC WITH A VIEW TO EVENTUALLY DEVELOPING CONSERVATION MEASURES FOR LIVING RESOURCES. AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND CAME TO THE MEETING WITH FIRM INSTRUCTIONS TO OBTAIN A RECOMMENDATION FOR A FISHERIES REGIME FOR THE TREATY AREA,BUT EVENTUALLY BOWED TO THE ARGUMENTS OF MOST DELEGATIONS THAT,WHILE A DESIRABLE GOAL IN TIME, IT WAS NECESSARY FIRST TO OBTAIN PROPER DATA ON THE LIVING RESOURCES.

2. MINERAL RESOURCES WAS THE PRINCIPAL ISSUE OF THE MEETING, AND THE RECOMMENDATION WHICH RESULTED IN THE FINAL MOMENTS OF THE MEETING(SEE OSLO 2571) MARKED A BREAKTHROUGH FOR A CONTENTIOUS QUESTION WHICH HAD BEEN AVOIDED FOR JURIDICAL REASONS SINCE THE INCEPTION OF THE 1959 ANTARCTIC TREATY. THE MATTER OF A MORATORIUM ON COMMERCIAL EXPLORATION AND EXPLOITATION SURFACED EARLY IN THE DEBATE, THE CONCEPT BEING ARGUED PRINCIPALLY BY ARGENTINE,AUSTRALIA,CHILE,NEW ZEALAND AND THE SOVIET UNION, AND SUBSCRIBED TO IN ONE FORM OR ANOTHER BY MOST OTHERS. US INSISTANCE ON "VOLUNTARY

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RESTRAINT" UNDER CONTINUING REVIEW EVOKED LITTLE INTEREST AT THE OUTSET,BUT WAS FINALLY ACCEPTED AFTER HARD BARGAINING AS A COUNTERPOINT TO AGREEMENT TO WORK TOWARD AN INTERNATIONALLY AGREED SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEMS LIKELY TO ARISE FROM MINERAL RESOURCE ACTIVITY AND TO SET PRECISE TERMS OF REFERENCE THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS FOR A SPECIAL PREPARATORY COMMITTEE MEETING TO WORK TOWARD SUCH A SOLUTION. FRANCE OFFERED TO HOST THE SPECIAL PREPCOM IN 1976 AFTER THE LOS CONFERENCE, PRESUMABLY IN JUNE OR JULY. THE RECOMMENDATION WAS AGREED UPON ONLY IN THE FINAL MINUTES OF THE MEETING AND AFTER STRONG PERSUASIONS BY THE US REP WHICH BROUGHT A VERY RELUCTANT CHILE,USSR,AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND TO SEE THINGS OUR WAY.

3. OTHER MATTERS,WHILE TIME-CONSUMING, WERE DEALT WITH ROUTINELY.

4. COMMENT: THE US OBTAINED VIRTUALLY ALL IT SET OUT TO ACHIEVE AT THE EIGHTH CONSULTATIVE MEETING, DESPITE A TOUGH NEGOTIATING STANCE ON THE RESOURCES ISSUE WHICH THREATENED IN THE FINAL HOURS TO PREVENT A RESOLU-

TION OF THAT QUESTION. THE US POSITION OF LEADERSHIP,
WHICH HAD BEEN ERODED BY OUR INABILITY TO DISCUSS RE-
SOURCES IN THE PERIOD SINCE THE 1972 CONSULTATIVE MEETING,
WAS LARGELY RESTORED. BYRNE

UNQUOTE. INGERSOLL

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